

Listing of Claims

The following claim listing serves to replace all prior versions of the claims. All claims that are cancelled are cancelled without prejudice.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling an engine speed of a multi-cylinder engine to regulate an increase of the engine speed at a start-up of the engine, comprising the steps of:

detecting the start-up of the engine by detecting the engine speed;

detecting a warm-up condition of the engine by detecting a coolant temperature of the engine or a lubricant temperature of the engine; and

controlling the engine to inhibit combustion of at least one of the cylinders of the engine, according to the warm-up condition upon the detection of the start-up when the engine speed detected at the start-up is lower than a predetermined engine speed and when the coolant temperature or the lubricant temperature detected as the warm-up condition is greater than a predetermined value, wherein the engine includes a single throttle body.

2. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for controlling an engine speed of a multi-cylinder engine to regulate an increase of the engine speed at a start-up of the engine, comprising:

a start-up detector for detecting the start-up of the engine, wherein the start-up detector detects the start-up of the engine by detecting the engine speed;

a warm-up condition detector for detecting a warm-up condition of the engine, wherein the warm-up condition detector detects a coolant temperature of the engine or a lubricant temperature of the engine; and

a controller for controlling the engine to inhibit combustion of at least one of the cylinders of the engine according to the warm-up condition detected by the warm-up condition detector upon the detection of the start-up by the start-up detector, wherein the controller performs the control when the engine speed detected by the start-up detector is lower than a predetermined engine speed, and wherein the controller

performs the control when one of the coolant temperature or the lubricant temperature detected by the warm-up condition detector is greater than a threshold value, wherein the engine includes a single throttle body.

3- 4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein the controller is configured to inhibit combustion according to a predetermined pattern of non-combustion.

6. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the predetermined pattern of non-combustion includes a pause of combustion of at least one of the cylinders of the engine for a predetermined time length.

7. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the predetermined pattern of non-combustion includes a periodic or non-periodic pattern of non-combustion for at least one of the cylinders of the engine.

8. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the engine includes a fuel supply device, and wherein the controller is configured to cause the predetermined pattern of non-combustion by inhibiting fuel supply through the fuel supply device.

9. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the engine includes an igniting device, and wherein the controller is configured to cause the predetermined pattern of non-combustion by inhibiting spark from the igniting device.

10. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein the controller is an electronic control unit.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein the engine is a four-cycle

engine.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) ~~The personal watercraft of Claim 13,~~ **A personal watercraft comprising:**

a multi-cylinder engine;

a water jet pump with which an input shaft thereof is connected rotatably full-time with an output shaft of the engine; and

an apparatus for controlling an engine speed of the engine to regulate an increase of the engine speed at a start-up of the engine, the apparatus including:

a start-up detector for detecting the start-up of the engine;

a warm-up condition detector for detecting a warm-up condition of the engine; and

a controller for controlling the engine to inhibit combustion of at least one of the cylinders of the engine according to the warm-up condition detected by the warm-up condition detector upon the detection of the start-up by the start-up detector.

wherein the start-up detector detects a pressure inside the water jet pump, and wherein the controller performs the control when the pressure detected by the start-up detector is lower than a predetermined pressure.

15. (New) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein said warm-up condition of the engine is detected from a water temperature sensor positioned between an exhaust manifold and an exhaust pipe of the multi-cylinder engine.

16. (New) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein said control is triggered by an ON operation of a starter switch.

17. (New) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein the multi-cylinder engine includes a cooling system that uses outside water as a coolant.

18. (New) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein said inhibition of combustion is terminated when engine speed is no longer lower than the predetermined engine speed.

19. (New) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the controller includes a memory configured to store the predetermined pattern of non-combustion.

20. (New) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the predetermined pattern of non-combustion includes non-combustion at a predetermined subset of combustion opportunities for at least one cylinder of the multi-cylinder engine.